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Memorandum

To: ENRP Co-Chairs Sean O'Connor & Barry Weinstein, MD

From: Economic Development Subcommittee Chair Hector Titus

Re: August & September 2003 meetings

Date: September 26, 2003

The Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership's Economic Development Subcommittee met August 22 and September 10, 2003 at Christino's at the Amherst Marriott. Present for the August meeting (a joint meeting with the Transportation Subcommittee) were subcommittee members Titus and Nasoff, as well as members of the Transportation Subcommittee, ENRP Co-Chair Barry Weinstein and ENRP Member Laura St. Pierre. Present for the September meeting (a joint meeting with the Government Affairs Subcommittee) were subcommittee members Titus and Doolittle, as well as members of the Government Affairs Subcommittee.

Economic Development Working Group / Regional ED Strategy

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis for the Regional Economic Development Strategy and the Framework for Regional Growth has been completed. A draft strategy is now being produced, with extensive public input to follow. The final version of the strategy will be delivered by the end of the year. The Framework is using this SWOT and strategy as part of the economic development portion of its document.

Small Business Development

Subcommittee Chair Titus posed the question of what is being done in our region to foster small business retention and development. Through his preliminary research, it seems that while some groups are actively engaged with small business, there is no real regional small business administration, nor are the "big guys" such as the BNP, BNE, or IDAs very focused on small business. The basic question is what do small businesses need? The Subcommittee will continue to research this topic, with a goal of possibly bringing a project for concept approval by the end of the year. The next logical step is to do an inventory of current efforts in this area.

Niagara County Agriculture Project

Following referral from the general meeting, the subcommittee evaluated the request from the Niagara County Farm Bureau that they be given a four-year extension for a Niagara County regional agriculture project, as the original deadline of four years is due to expire (the Erie County project resulted in a quick cool facility at the Eden Valley Cooperative). The money that Erie County allocated for the Niagara project remains available. **The ENRP Economic Development Subcommittee recommends that the ENRP ask the two Legislatures to grant a four-year extension for a Niagara County regional agriculture project, and that funds remain dedicated to this project.**

REDD

Please see the Government Affairs Subcommittee report for an update on REDD.

Other Topics

Other topics discussed include the (then) pending state brownfields legislation, the future of the Buffalo Niagara Enterprise, MUNNIX, and the economic development “infrastructure” we are attempting to put in place.